

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSO-00

INRE-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 ACDA-05 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-05

CCO-00 A-01 SCCT-01 SAM-01 SAB-01 /094 W

----- 000632

O 161440Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6664

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

USINT BAGHDAD UNN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

DIA WASHDC

CIA WASHDC

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 12873

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: BEIRUT QUIET AGAIN

REF: BEIRUT 12820 (15 OCT 75 1520Z)

SUMMARY: SEVERE CLASHES IN EAST BEIRUT SUBSIDED LATE AFTER-
NOON OCT 15. CITY IS GENERALLY CALM TODAY. END SUMMARY.

1. EXCHANGES OF FIRE IN THE NABA, SIN EL-FIL AND DEKWANEH
QUARTERS OF EAST BEIRUT WERE SEVERE DURING EARLY AFTERNOON
OCT 15 BUT SUBSIDED LATER IN THE DAY AFTER INTERVENTION OF PLO
AND SECURITY FORCES. SHOOTING IN THESE AREAS WAS MUCH REDUCED
DURING NIGHT OCT 15-16, AND BY EARLY MORNING OCT 16 THE AREA
WAS GENERALLY CALM, TENSION REPORTEDLY PERSISTS IN CHIYAH AS
RESULT KIDNAPPINGSMENTIONED REFTEL, BUT NO SHOOTING HAS BROKEN
OUT THERE. SECURITY HQ IN BEIRUT REPORTS ITS MAIN PROBLEM IN
CAPITAL SO FAR TODAY (AS OF 1200 HOURS (LOCAL) (OCT 16) WAS
SNIPER ACTIVITY NEAR CITY CENTER WHICH WAS BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL
MID-MORNING.

2. ALTHOUGH TRAFFIC IN BEIRUT IS HEAVY, ONLY SOME SHOPS AND
BANKS OPENED TODAY. EXCHANGE RATE, WHICH RANGED AROUND
2.45 TO 2.50 LEBANESE POUNDS TO THE DOLLAR WHEN BANKS LAST
OPENED OCT 14, IS LOWER TODAY, VARYING FROM 2.40 TO 2.45.
PORT IS PARTIALLY OPERATING. ARABIC PRESS REPORTS 150 SHIPS
ARE WAITING TO UNLOAD.

3. TRIPOLI AND ZAHLE ARE QUIET, DESPITE CONTINUED TENSION IN
LATTER CITY DUE TO KIDNAPPINGSREPORTED REFTEL WHICH APPARENTLY
NOT YET RESOLVED. THERE IS WORD OF A NEW INCIDENT IN A VILLAGE
IN AKKAR REGION IN NORTH LEBANON THE DIMENSIONS OF WHICH ARE
UNCLEAR BUT WHICH APPEARS RELATIVELY MINOR ON EARLY REPORTS.

4. DATT HAS REPORT FROM RELIABLE CHRISTIAN SOURCE THAT
UPSURGE OF FIGHTING IN DEKWANEH/NABA AREA STARTING OCT 13-14
WAS PHALANGE-INSTIGATED AND WAS DESIGNED TO KEEP POT BOILING
AS LEBANESE PROBLEM ENTERED ARAB LEAGUE. PHALANGE REPOR-
TEDLY FIRED INTO TEL ZAATAR REFUGEE CAMP THAT NIGHT, LARGELY
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UNPROVOKED, AND PALESTINIANS RESPONDED WITH HEAVY WEAPONS
MENTIONED REFTEL. THIS VERSION SUPPORTED BY REPORTING OTHER
CHANNELS. WE THUS HAVE ONE OF RARE INSTANCES IN ENTIRE ROUND
4 WHERE WEIGHT OF EVIDENCE FOR STARTING AN ESCALATION POINTS IN
SINGLE DIRECTION. IN MOST CASES, WE ARE UNABLE ASSESS
BLAME IN GENERAL ESCALATION DIFFICULT TO RECONSTRUCT.

5. THE "NATIONAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE" DID NOT MEET YESTERDAY

AND NO SCHEDULE YET ANNOUNCED FOR ITS RESUMPTION. ITS POLITICAL SUB-COMMITTEE HOLDS FIRST SESSION TODAY. RUMORS PERSIST THAT INTERIOR MINISTER CHAMOUN IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE COMPOSITION OF THIS SUB-COMMITTEE.

6. MOSLEM REACTIONS TO THE MEMORANDUM REPORTED REFTEL FROM MARONITE LEAGUE AND MARONITE MONASTERIES ARE PREDICTABLY STRONG. THE HIGHER ISLAMIC COUNCIL MEETS TODAY TO DRAFT A REBUTTAL THAT WILL PROBABLY BE PUBLISHED LATER THIS WEEK.
GODLEY

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